Francis Hong – Chairman, Taiwan Medical and Biotech Industry Association (TMBIA)



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Francis Hong, chairman of Taiwan Medical and Bio

tech Industry Association (TMBIA), takes a moment during the 2019 Medical Taiwan and Taiwan Medical Components & Manufacturing Expo (MCMEX) *in Taipei to share the mission of the A ssociation, key issues being faced by its members, and an overview of Taiwan's medical device landscape and strengths.*

Can you please introduce the TMBIA and the current key challenges and priorities of the Association and its members?

Our Association was established in 1953, so we have a long traditional history and currently gather 370 members across Taiwan. All of our member companies are medical device manufacturers. Last year they collectively exported USD 50 billon of products. About 70 percent of our members' main business comes from exports. As chairman of TMBIA, part of my job is to help our members to increase international sales, so global trade is a priority for me.

This year's Medical Taiwan and Taiwan Medical Components & Manufacturing Expo (MCMEX) is the main medical device exhibition in Taiwan, meanwhile I encourage our members to attend other

exhibitions around the world in key markets like the US and Japan. Strategic export markets really depend on each company and its products uniquely.

What are you hoping to accomplish by attending the 2019 Medical Taiwan and Taiwan Medical Components & Manufacturing Expo (MCMEX)?

My primary mission with this exhibition is to attract more international buyers and connect them with our members and their products. However, not all of the TBMIA's members are in attendance this year. Moving forward, we hope to see more foreign buyers attracted to Taiwan for these exhibitions. Compared to other countries, it's not very costly to attend such industry events in Taiwan. Therefore, we are aiming to enhance even further the turnout of participants in the upcoming years!

There is a lot of good technology coming from Asia at the moment, especially from China, Korea and Japan. What is the positioning of Taiwan to compete with these regional players?

Customers always think that price point is the most important purchase criteria. However, when dealing with medical devices, although price may be important, quality is the key factor as the products are used on the human body. In Taiwan, we have tough regulations, which means our products must go through extra steps to be approved and certified by the government. The TMBIA's members cannot compete with Chinese prices, but we focus on quality, after-sale service, and building long-term relationships with customers. Competing with other Asian countries´ pricing is impossible for Taiwanese medtechs as it would mean sacrificing quality, but our competitive advantage is the added value we can bring after sale.

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